

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 3-9 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,469,740 B1 to Kuroda et al. ("the Kuroda reference") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,507,519 B1 to Collins et al. ("the Collins reference").

Claims 10-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The acknowledgement, in the Office Action, of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d), and that the certified copy of the priority document has been received, is noted with appreciation.

The indication, in the Office Action, that the Examiner has no objections to the drawings filed on January 31, 2001, is noted with appreciation.

Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. These changes do not introduce any new matter.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

The rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over the Kuroda reference in view of the Collins reference, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

Kuroda teaches methods of canceling spatially fixed noise, known as fixed pattern noise (FPN), which results from variations in the characteristics of transistors from one pixel to another. Specifically, Kuroda teaches that the potentials of different pixels are individually adjusted by applying different signals to the pixels. This reduces variations in characteristics from one pixel to another.

In contrast, amended claim 1 requires that a bias voltage fed to the pixels is adjusted according to the electric signal output from the pixels "wherein the bias voltage is equal for all the pixels." That is, the bias is the same for all pixels. As a result, the signal levels of an entire image captured by the image sensor are shifted, which produces clearer pictures. Clearly, claim 1 which requires that the same bias be applied to all pixels distinguishes Kuroda which teaches applying different biases to individual pixels.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1. It is therefore, respectfully submitted that claim 2 distinguishes Kuroda for at least the same reasons as provided herein above in respect of claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Kuroda reference in view of the Collins reference, be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims, does not increase the total number of claims, and does not present any multiple dependency claims. Accordingly, no fee based on the number or type of claims is currently due. However, if a


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fee, other than the issue fee, is due, please charge this fee to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260.

If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,

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